

proscribe them as characters unworthy of every trust. It would have been to me a circumstance of great relief, had I found a moderate participation of office in the hands of the majority. I would gladly have left to time and accident to raise them to their just share. But their total conclusion calls for prompt corrections. I shall correct the procedure; but that done, shall disdain to follow it, and return with joy to that state of things, when the only question concerning a candidate shall be, Is he honest? Is he capable? Is he faithful to the Constitution? (To Elias Shipman and Others, 1801. F. VIII., 69-70.)

OFFICES.—These letters all relating to office fall within the general rule, which even the very first week of my being engaged in the administration obliged me to establish, to wit, that of not answering letters on office specifically, but leaving the answer to be found in what is done or not done on them. You will readily conceive into what scrapes one would get by saying no, either with or without reason, by using a softer language which might excite false hope or by saying yes prematurely. And to take away all offence from the silent answer, it is necessary to adhere to it in every case rigidly, as well with bosom friends as with strangers. (To Aaron Burr, 1801. F. VIII., 102.)

OFFICES.—I still think our original idea as to office is best; that is, to depend, for the obtaining a first participation, on deaths, resignations, and delinquencies. This will least affect the tranquillity of the people, and prevent their giving in to the suggestion of our enemies, that ours has been a contest for office, not for principle. This is rather a slow operation, but it is sure if we pursue it steadily, which, however, has not been done with the undeviating resolution. I could have wished. To these means of obtaining a just share in the transaction of the public business, shall be added one other, to wit, removal for electioneering, activity, or open and industrious opposition to the principles of the present government, legislative and executive. Every officer of the government may vote at elections according to his conscience; but we should betray the cause